



Isiah Leggett
County Executive



Darren M. Popkin
Sheriff

Office of the Sheriff
Domestic Violence Coordinating Council
Thursday, September 13, 2018
5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Family Justice Center 5th Floor Conference Room
600 Jefferson Plaza, Suite 500, Rockville, Maryland 20852

Minutes

In Attendance: Debbie Feinstein, Vice Chair (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); Teresa Bennett (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); Assistant Chief Marcus Jones (Montgomery County Department of Police); Tom Manion (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Tina Michaels (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); The Honorable John Moffett (District Court for Montgomery County); Ronald Whalen (Community Member); Smita Varia, Staff (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff);

Guests: Ingrid Gonzalez (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); Lauren Brown (Member of the Public); Spencer Cantrell (Jewish Coalition Against Domestic Abuse); Laurie Duker (Court Watch Montgomery); Hilary Tebeleff (House of Ruth);

Absent: The Honorable Sidney Katz, Chair (Montgomery County Council); Nicole Drew (Montgomery County Commission for Women); Rochelle Perry (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); The Honorable Rebecca Smondrowski (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Cheryl Kravitz (Community Member); Resa Levy (Community Member); Eshigo Okasili (Community Member);

I. Welcome and Introductions

Vice Chair Debbie Feinstein welcomed all members and guests to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

II. Approval of July Minutes

The July 12, 2018 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed. Ron Whalen proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Assistant Chief Marcus Jones and passed.

III. Announcements

Smita Varia reported that there are a few updates from the County Executive's Office. There is a new Parliamentary Procedure Training that all County Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCC) members (including ex officio members) and staff are required to take

within 30 days. Smita Varia will send a link to the training, and all members must send her their certificate of completion.

The County Executive's office has become aware that political campaign information has been sent to, from and among BCC members. The County's policy regarding political activity states that the County email system and County email lists cannot be used to disseminate campaign related material. This means there should be no mention of an individual's candidacy, including in the signature line of emails that involve County business. All County employees, including BCC members, are subject to this policy.

Smita Varia also reported that we will have new members joining the DVCC in November. In addition, Rochelle Perry from the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation has been transferred to Baltimore. Ingrid Gonzalez will be nominated as the ex-officio member for the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation.

Smita Varia also announced that the three DVCC Statute amendments voted on during the July 2018 DVCC meeting have been submitted to the County Executive. The first amendment is to increase the term for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Coordinating Council from 1 year to 2 years. The second proposed change is to create 2 new seats for representatives from non-governmental or non-profit domestic violence service or advocacy organizations. The third proposed change was to allow a high school student in any grade to apply to the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

Tom Manion announced that there are currently 2 Client Assistant positions open at the Family Justice Center. Client Assistants are the primary contact for victims of intimate partner violence that come to the FJC for services. One position is grant funded, and the other is a merit position. The deadline for applying is September 17th.

IV. Guest Speaker: Laurie Duker, Court Watch Montgomery

Laurie Duker presented on a report by Court Watch Montgomery titled, *Do domestic violence victims in Montgomery County have full access to justice?* The report examines District Court judges' use of five fundamental practices:

- When victims wish to drop their case, judges should try to ensure that the victim has not been coerced or intimidated and take a moment to discuss their safety.
- When victims do drop their cases, judges should encourage petitioners to return to court any time they are in danger from an intimate partner.
- Judges should tell every respondent receiving an order that violating a protective order can result in imprisonment.
- Judges should tell every respondent receiving a final protective order that they must surrender all guns to law enforcement immediately.
- Whenever both parties are present for a domestic violence hearing, judges and bailiffs should implement staggered exits, having the respondent wait in the courtroom for a minimum of 15 minutes after the victim's departure to guarantee the victim's safety between the courthouse and their transportation.

The report is online at <https://courtwatchmontgomery.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/CWM-Fundamentals-Report.FIN-6.28.18.pdf>.

V. Annual Report Discussion

Smita Varia briefly went over the DVCC Annual Report that is due to the County Executive next week. She asked for members to please send her any edits by Wednesday, September 19th.

VI. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Annual Report Findings

This discussion was tabled until the November 2018 meeting by DVCC Vice Chair Debbie Feinstein due to time constraints.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Education and Outreach Committee - *Debbie Feinstein, Chair*

Debbie Feinstein reported that the Choose Respect Conference will be on April 7th at Richard Montgomery High School. The PSA Video Contest for middle and high school students will go live on October 1 at the start of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This year, the rules state that entries have to address two types of abuse.

Debbie Feinstein announced that on October 25th from 8:30 - 3:45 pm is the 2018 Interfaith Domestic Violence Conference at the Judicial College Education and Conference Center in Annapolis.

The Expect Respect presentations are already scheduled at 17 schools this fall. Smita Varia is working with JCADA on creating an Expect Respect presentation for 6th and 7th graders. Coaching Boys Into Men is now in 7 schools. Athletes as Leaders, a program for female athletes is going to be piloted at the Jewish Day School.

The FJC Multi Language Outreach Cards are going to be on all 375 Ride On Buses in October. Smita Varia is also creating a backing to the card holders that will make identifying the cards easier. Smita Varia also worked with a vendor that printed an advertisement of the FJC on 42,000 pharmacy bags that are being distributed at Kensington Pharmacy. Kensington Pharmacy services Kensington, Bethesda, Rockville, Wheaton, Silver Spring, and has a mail order program.

Debbie Feinstein, Donna Rismiller and Smita Varia met with staff at Circuit Court who facilitate the Mandatory Custody Parenting Classes. Smita Varia is creating slides that will be shown during breaks during the classes about domestic violence and the services at the FJC.

The Committee is also working on a press release to promote all these initiatives and a proclamation that will be given at a Montgomery Council Meeting for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

B. Victim Services Committee update - *Tom Manion, Chair*

Tom Manion reported that during Fiscal Year 2018, the Family Justice Center provided services to 1,547 clients in 15 different languages. In the past, the FJC has seen an average of 1,000 clients per year. The age of clients ranged from 14 to 80 with an average age of 35. The FJC also held 150 Temporary Protective Order hearings using video conference, and 95% of those protective orders were granted.

Tom Manion also announced that the FJC has a new offsite partner – the Pro Bono Counseling Project. This organization has a network of 700 therapists in Maryland and rarely has a wait list. They are able to provide counseling in many different languages.

They do have income guidelines and are unable to address any psychiatric conditions or addictions.

The Family Justice Center Foundation put out an appeal for on the need for stuffed animals at the FJC. Sheriff Popkin shared it on his Facebook page and a few news outlets picked up the story. As a result, the FJC has received over 1,000 stuffed animals.

Teresa Bennet announced that the group from Montgomery County that applied for the Advanced Strangulation Training in San Diego was accepted. There are several people from Montgomery County going, including Shady Grove Hospital, APP, SAO and MCPD.

C. Offender Program and Policy Committee – Tina Michaels, Chair

Tina Michaels reported that the committee has been working on policies for implementing the Criminal Procedure – Violations of Release Law (HB 311) which will go into effect on October 1st. The policy will be that when a person violates the conditions of release, police will look them up in Secure Case Search to see the bond conditions and can then arrest them. Pre-Trial is also working with Police to put the conditions in METERS. An important piece of this law is that the violation does not have to be in the presence of an officer.

D. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee – Assistant Chief Marcus Jones, Chair
Assistant Chief Marcus Jones reported that 900 officers will get access to secure case search in order to look up bond conditions when responding to a call.

The Police are also working on policies for the Firearms Transfer law and the Extreme Risk Protective Order law with the Sheriff's Department.

VIII. Adjournment

Debbie Feinstein, Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting at 7:08 PM.

The next DVCC meeting will be on November 8, 2018, 5pm-7pm at the Family Justice Center



Domestic Violence Coordinating Council